

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, July 21, 2003
Volume 39—Number 29
Pages 909–939

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Editor’s Note: The President was at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on July 18, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is also available on the Internet on the GPO Access service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

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US GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS
Washington DC 20402

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Week Ending Friday, July 18, 2003

**Remarks Prior to Discussions With
President Olusegun Obasanjo of
Nigeria and an Exchange With
Reporters in Abuja, Nigeria**

July 12, 2003

President Obasanjo. Mr. President—
President Bush. Here, I'll stand up with
you.

President Obasanjo. Is that what you
want?

President Bush. Oh, absolutely. I want to
be over here. [*Laughter*]

President Obasanjo. It is, indeed, a mat-
ter of general honor and pleasure for me to
welcome you, Mr. President, to our country,
Nigeria. On behalf of all the people of Nige-
ria, I sincerely extend to you our warmest
greetings on this historic visit to our con-
tinent of Africa in general and to Nigeria in
particular.

President has generally acknowledged that
much has changed in the world since the end
of the cold war. There's no doubt there is
an emerging new world order, with new re-
alities of nations and people throughout the
world—their international outlooks, seek
new friends and confirm old realities in the
bid to find fresh places for global peace, har-
mony, and security.

In this imagined new world order, Mr.
President, the rest of the world acknowledges
that the United States of America will remain
a key player politically, economically, and
militarily. Thus we appreciate your visit to
our continent as indication that Africa is to
be reckoned with in the emerging world
order. We salute your visit to so many African
countries—four of them—and now Nigeria,
in particular, as an expression that Africa
should not be sidelined or even detached
from the—of the emerging world order.

We in Africa realize the extent to which
we are ultimately responsible for our own de-
velopment and that we are the architects of
our fortune or misfortune. Nevertheless, this

is also generally true that hardly any country
has transformed its fortunes without external
support from friends and well-wishers. That
is why we acknowledge with deepest appre-
ciation the role that the United States has
played and continues to play, particularly
within the G-8, in supporting the vision of
the New Partnership for African Develop-
ment, NEPAD. As you are well aware, Mr.
President, NEPAD is our vision as well as
our blueprint for making our continent great.

Through the NEPAD, African leaders
have made a commitment to the African peo-
ples and to the world to work together in
developing the continent by consolidating
democracy, good governance, and imple-
menting such general social, economic devel-
opment programs. Implicit in the NEPAD
program are all the universal values, such as
democracy, human rights, rule of law, eradi-
cation of corruption, conflict resolution, and
fight against terrorism. We are hopeful that
NEPAD will strengthen Africa's position in
the emerging world order.

Here in Nigeria, we are making bold
strides to consolidate democracy and reform
our Government structures as well as the na-
tional economy. We also have continuing and
new regional responsibilities, especially in
the area of maintaining security. These areas
require global understanding, cooperation,
and substantial financial support. You will
agree with me that sustainable national re-
forms are central to regional and global trans-
formation and for development.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you, friend.

It's my honor, Mr. President, to be here
as your guest. Gosh, we've met three or four
times already. You keep telling me to come
to your country—finally made it. And I'm
glad we're here. It's been a—it's an honor.

Listen, Nigeria is a very important country
on the continent of Africa. And because of
your forthrightness and your style and your
commitment, you're a very important leader

on this continent, and I'm honored to be here with you.

I appreciate very much your commitment to trade and markets, and we look forward to being an active trading partner with Nigeria. I appreciate your commitment to regional peace, and we will work with Nigeria and ECOWAS on issues such as Liberia. I appreciate very much your focus on education, and the United States stands ready to help.

But most of all, Mr. President, I appreciate your honesty and openness and forthrightness when it comes to battling the pandemic of AIDS. You're truly an international leader on this issue. And the United States of America, when Congress acts, will stand side by side with leaders such as yourself to fight the pandemic of AIDS to save lives.

So Mr. President, it's an honor to be here. I've been looking forward to this visit for a long time. I appreciate your leadership, and I appreciate your friendship. Thank you very much.

Director of Central Intelligence/State of the Union Address

Q. Mr. President, do you have faith in your CIA Director?

President Bush. Yes, I do, absolutely. I've got confidence in George Tenet. I've got confidence in the men and women who work at the CIA, and I continue to—I look forward to working with them and—as we win this war on terror.

Q. Mr. President—

Assistant Press Secretary Reed Dickens. Thank you all. Thank you.

Q. Is the matter over then?

Q. Mr. Bush, what about—

Q. Do you consider the matter over, sir, that—

President Bush. I do.

Liberia

Q. What about Liberia? Is America sending troops to Liberia?

President Bush. The President and I just talked about Liberia, and we are—our assessment teams are still in place. We need to know exactly what is necessary to achieve our objectives. The first objective, of course, is for Mr. Taylor to leave the country, which

he said he is—do. And I want to thank the President for his leadership on that issue. It's been a tough issue, but he's led. And the world is grateful for that.

Secondly, we've got a commitment to the cease-fire. And therefore, we need to know exactly what it means to keep the cease-fire in place. Thirdly, we got a commitment to relieve human suffering, and we need to know what that has required. And so, we're still in the process of assessing. And I told the President we would be active. And the definition of that will be made known when we're—when we understand all the parameters.

Q. See a decision next week, sir?

Assistant Press Secretary Dickens. Thank you all very much. Thank you—

President Bush. I'm not sure yet when, Randy [Randall Mikkelsen, Reuters].

Assistant Press Secretary Dickens. Pool, let's go.

Q. Thank you, sir.

President Bush. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:58 a.m. at Aso Presidential Villa. In his remarks, he referred to President Charles Taylor of Liberia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Leon H. Sullivan Summit in Abuja

July 12, 2003

Thank you all. Thank you very much. Thanks a lot. Please be seated—please. J.C., thank you for that warm introduction. I thought you might have lost your touch—[laughter]—as a retired Member of Congress, but you didn't. I'm proud to be introduced by my friend. And I want to thank you all very much for such a warm welcome.

This the last day of our journey through Africa. And each of us is drawn to this summit by the vision of the late Leon Sullivan. And I'm so honored to be in the presence of Mrs. Grace Sullivan. It's great to see you again, Mrs. Sullivan.

We believe that relationship between America and Africa will benefit both our people. Work of the summit to promote commerce and understanding across the Atlantic is important work, and I'm determined that the American Government will do its part. We will help nations on this continent to achieve greater health and education and trade with the world. Working together, we can help make this a decade of rising prosperity and expanding peace across Africa.

We've got a great visit here, thanks to the hospitality of the President, my friend. Mr. President, thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your leadership. I appreciate the President's leadership on crucial issues. I particularly appreciate the fact that he's willing to confront the HIV/AIDS epidemic head on, with an honest approach.

Madam First Lady, thank you very much for your hospitality, as well. Laura and I have enjoyed getting to be with you. I thank the Vice President and all the members of the Government who are here.

I'm particularly pleased to be traveling with such good company in Colin Powell and Condi Rice and Andy Card and other members of my administration. I want to thank Congressman William Jefferson from the State of Louisiana for being here. And I understand that Rodney Slater is here as well. Rodney, thank you for coming. Rodney, good to see you.

I appreciate so much the Sullivan Summit leadership: Hope Sullivan and Carl Masters and, of course, one the great public servants in America—America's history, Andy Young. Thank you all.

Dave O'Reilly understands the definition of corporate responsibility, and I appreciate the leadership of Dave and Chevron. Their job is not only to make a return for their shareholders; their job is to show compassion as well. And I appreciate your leadership, Dave.

I'm especially thankful to all the citizens of Nigeria for such a warm welcome, such gracious hospitality. Nigeria is a nation of great diversity and great promise. My country deeply appreciates the friendship of Nigeria.

This has been a wonderful week for Laura and me. We have seen the rich culture and resources of Africa as well as the continuing

challenges of Africa. We have met really fine people. I have confidence in Africa's future because I believe in the goodness and the compassion and the enterprise of the men and women on this continent. With greater opportunity, the peoples of Africa will build their own future of hope. And the United States will help this vast continent of possibilities to reach its full potential.

I began my trip in Senegal, where I met with President Wade and seven other leaders of West Africa. These leaders are committed to the spread of democratic institution and democratic values throughout Africa. Yet those institutions and values are threatened in some parts of Africa by terrorism and chaos and civil war. To extend liberty on this continent, we must build security and peace on this continent.

Several African governments face particular dangers from terrorists, and the United States is working closely with those nations to fight terror, and we will do more. I proposed a new \$100-million initiative to help those governments in east Africa protect their people and to fight terrorist networks. The United States is also supporting the efforts of good friends all across this continent, friends such as Mauritania. We will not allow terrorists to threaten African peoples or to use Africa as a base to threaten the world.

America is also committed to helping end Africa's regional wars, including those in Sudan and Congo, the Ivory Coast, and Liberia. In Liberia, the United States strongly supports the cease-fire that was signed last month. President Taylor needs to leave Liberia so that his country can be spared further grief and bloodshed.

In Dakar this week, I met with President Kufuor of Ghana. He also leads ECOWAS. I assured him the United States will work closely and in concert with the United Nations and ECOWAS to maintain the cease-fire and to allow a peaceful transfer of power.

This week, I've also seen the dedicated efforts of Africans who are fighting hunger and famine, illiteracy, and a deadly preventable disease. At the TASO clinic in Entebbe and here at the National Hospital, I saw the heroic efforts of African doctors and nurses and volunteers who are devoted to saving and extending lives. I also heard from men and

women who are living with AIDS and continue to lead productive and hopeful lives. The progress we are already seeing in parts of Africa is proof that AIDS can be defeated in Africa.

The people of Africa are fighting HIV/AIDS with courage. And I'm here to say, you will not be alone in your fight. In May, I signed a bill that authorizes \$15 billion for the global fight on AIDS. This week, a committee of the House of Representatives took an important step to fund the first year of the authorization bill, and the Senate is beginning to take up debate. The House of Representatives and the United States Senate must fully fund this initiative for the good of the people on this continent of Africa.

On this journey, I've also seen the economic potential of Africa. Botswana is a model of economic reform and has one of the highest sustained economic growth rates in the world. Yet, far too many Africans still live in poverty. And providing effective and promoting—providing effective aid, promoting free markets and the rule of law, and encouraging greater trade, we will help millions of Africans find more opportunity and a chance for better life.

To be effective, development aid requires pro-growth policies and strong reforms in the nations that receive the aid. The Millennium Challenge Account I have proposed would direct resources to countries with governments that rule justly, root out corruption, encourage entrepreneurship, and invest in the health and education of their people.

Countries making these changes will gain more help from America. They will gain more foreign investment, more trade, and more jobs. And I call upon the United States Congress to finalize the MCA legislation and to fully fund the first year of this initiative.

One specific obstacle to development in many countries is the lack of access to capital. Many Africans find it impossible to get a loan for a business or a home, and this makes it far difficult for people to build equity or to borrow money to start a business. The United States has some of the most effective mortgage markets in the world. We understand the flow of capital, and we want to share this knowledge with the nations of Africa.

So I've asked Secretary of the Treasury John Snow to work with experts in America and Africa and with financial institutions like Fannie Mae and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to help strengthen and broaden capital markets on this continent. With the ability to borrow money to buy homes and start businesses, more Africans will have the tools to achieve their dreams.

My travels this week underscore the critical importance of trade to the economic future of Africa. Open trade has proven its ability to increase the standards of living and to create new jobs and to encourage the habits of freedom and enterprise.

In Botswana, I visited one of our new Hubs for Global Competitiveness that is helping African businesses sell their products into the United States and on global markets. I have seen—and I know you have seen—how the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, is bringing jobs and investment and opportunity to sub-Saharan Africa. And to help give businesses the confidence to make long-term investments in Africa, Congress must extend AGOA beyond 2008.

Our Nation will work to complete a free trade agreement with the nations of the Southern African Customs Union to create new opportunities for farmers and workers and entrepreneurs all across Africa. To achieve our goals of a more peaceful, hopeful, and prosperous Africa, we need a partnership of our governments. We also need partnerships among our people, our businessmen and doctors and bankers and teachers and clergy. These are the kinds of bridges that Leon Sullivan dedicated his life to building. And you're continuing that good work, and I thank you for that.

Eight years ago at the Sullivan Summit, delegates launched the MedHelp Foundation, which is training and equipping physicians in Senegal. This foundation has also assembled a team of American medical professionals in Senegal that has conducted more than 150 operations, including 88 open-heart surgeries.

Another group established by Reverend Sullivan is the International Foundation For Education and Self-Help. Over the past 10 years, the foundation has helped build more than 182 rural schools in Africa, placed 820

American teachers in African schools. Today I'm pleased to announce that the United States Agency for International Development will give a new \$5-million grant to the foundation, resources that will help send 90 American teachers to Africa to train more than 14,000 African educators. In these and many other ways, you are doing more than fulfilling the dreams of one man; you're helping to unlock the potential of an entire continent.

At Goree Island earlier this week, I spoke of how the struggles of African Americans against the injustices of slavery and segregation helped to redeem the promise of America's founding. Today, you are carrying the same passion for liberty and justice from America to Africa. Americans believe that people in every culture and in every land have the right to live in freedom and deserve the chance to improve their lives. And we know that the people of Africa, when given their rights and given their chance, will achieve great things on this continent of possibilities.

May God bless Africa, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. at Congress Hall. In his remarks, he referred to former Representative J.C. Watts; Rev. Leon H. Sullivan's wife, Grace Sullivan, and daughter, Hope L. Sullivan, summit president; Andrew J. Young, summit chairman; Carl Masters, summit vice chairman; President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and his wife, Stella; Vice President Atiku Abubakar of Nigeria; Rodney Slater, board member, Leon H. Sullivan Foundation; David J. O'Reilly, chairman of the board and chief executive officer, ChevronTexaco Corp., summit corporate sponsor; President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal; President Charles Taylor of Liberia; and President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana.

The President's Radio Address

July 12, 2003

Good morning. I've spent this week visiting Africa, a continent of great challenge and promise. Throughout this journey and in meetings with leaders of more than 10 countries, I have reaffirmed America's strong commitment to a more peaceful and prosperous future for all the peoples of Africa.

America supports democratic and economic reforms in Africa because we know the power of freedom to lift whole nations and bring new opportunities to millions. And in a time of growing commerce across the globe, we are working to ensure that the nations of Africa are full partners in the trade and prosperity of the world.

Progress in Africa depends on peace and stability, so America is standing with friends and allies to help end regional wars. And against the murderous ambitions of terrorists, the United States and African countries are working in common purpose. We will not permit terrorists to threaten African peoples or to use Africa as a base to threaten the world.

The United States is also committed to helping African peoples overcome one of the gravest dangers they have ever faced, the spread of HIV/AIDS. And the need is urgent. Across the continent today, nearly 30 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, including 3 million children under the age of 15. In Botswana alone, where I visited on Thursday, nearly 40 percent of the adult population has HIV.

People in Africa are waging a courageous fight against this disease. In another nation on my trip, Uganda, urban and rural clinics are providing vital medical care, counseling, sound and honest information on AIDS prevention. Thanks to caring people and wise government policies, Uganda has dramatically reduced its infection rate. More Ugandan children are growing up with mothers and fathers, and Uganda is reclaiming its future.

The tremendous progress in Uganda is showing that AIDS can be defeated across Africa. Yet current efforts to oppose the disease are simply not equal to the need. More than 4 million people require immediate drug treatment, but just 1 percent of them are receiving the medicine they require. Africa has the will to fight AIDS, but it needs the resources as well.

Over the next 5 years, the United States Congress has authorized \$15 billion to fight AIDS around the world, with a special focus on 14 nations in Africa and the Caribbean.

Working with governments and private groups and faith-based organizations, we will build on the progress in Uganda by establishing a comprehensive system to prevent, diagnose, and treat AIDS.

We will support abstinence-based education for young people and provide comprehensive services to prevent millions of new infections. We will provide HIV testing and purchase antiretroviral medications and other drugs that are needed to extend lives. We will help establish broad and efficient networks to deliver drugs. We will help build, renovate, and equip clinics and laboratories. We'll prepare doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals to treat AIDS more effectively. And the resources America provides will also help to hire and train childcare workers to look after orphans and provide care at home to many AIDS patients.

This week, a committee of the House of Representatives took an important step to fund the first year of this effort. I ask the Senate to move quickly as well. And I urge the entire Congress to fully fund my request for the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief so that America can help turn the tide against AIDS in Africa.

All of our actions in Africa—from fighting AIDS to promoting security and prosperity across the continent—represent the ideals that have always guided America in the world. The United States is committed to the success of Africa, because the peoples of Africa deserve to live in freedom and dignity and to share in the progress of our times.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 8:15 a.m., local time, on July 11 at the Sheraton Pretoria Hotel and Towers in Pretoria, South Africa, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.d.t., on July 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 6-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after completion of all other Presidential activities for July 12. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement Welcoming the New Leadership of the African Union

July 12, 2003

I congratulate President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique on his appointment as the new President of the African Union. I also extend congratulations to President Konare of Mali on his appointment as the new Chair of the Commission of the African Union. I am confident that the African Union—and the people of Africa—will be well-served by the experience and vision these two leaders bring to these important posts.

Africa is a place of both great potential and daunting challenges. The United States shares the hopes of peoples across the African Continent for a future of greater peace, greater freedom, and greater development. And America will work in partnership with all African nations committed to these great goals.

The African Union has the mandate and the responsibility to respond effectively to Africa's challenges, including instability, terrorist threats, challenges to the effective rule of law, HIV/AIDS, poverty, and humanitarian emergencies. I look forward to the African Union continuing to play a vital role in shaping Africa's future under its dynamic new leadership.

Remarks Following Discussions With Secretary-General Kofi Annan of the United Nations and an Exchange With Reporters

July 14, 2003

The President. I'm so honored that Kofi Annan has come back to the Oval Office. We've had a great discussion. I briefed him on my trip to Africa, his native continent, and I told him that I was most impressed with the possibilities of the continent. I saw the potential, and I also saw many of the problems. And I want to thank the Secretary-General for his work on hunger and HIV/AIDS. We're going to work closely with him to help defeat the pandemic.

And the other thing we talked about was Liberia. I assured him that our Government's position is a strong position. We want to enable ECOWAS to get in and help create the conditions necessary for the cease-fire to hold, that Mr. Taylor must leave, that we'll participate with the troops. We're in the process, still, of determining what is necessary, what ECOWAS can bring to the table, when they can bring it to the table, what is the timetable, and be able to match the necessary U.S. help to expediting the ECOWAS' participation.

I told the Secretary-General that we want to help, that there must be a U.N. presence, quickly, into Liberia. He and I discussed how fast it would take to blue-helmet whatever forces arrived, other than our own, of course. We would not be blue-helmeted. We would be there to facilitate and then to leave.

And we had a good discussion. And I think we had a meeting of minds on that subject.

We talked about Iraq. And I told him and assured him that the United States would stay the course because we believe freedom is on its way to the Iraqi people. And by that I mean that the Iraqi people are beginning to assume more and more responsibility in their society. Free society requires a certain kind of responsible behavior. And we're seeing more and more of that amongst the Iraqi citizens. Our deep desire is to make sure that the infrastructure is repaired, that people are educated, and health care delivery systems are good.

I was honest in my appraisal when I told him that I recognize certain elements of the former regime are interested in keeping the infrastructure blown up because of—for pure power reasons, and that—I told him, and I will continue to speak as clearly as I can that an attack on the Iraqi infrastructure by the Ba'athists are—is an attack on the Iraqi people. And it's those Iraqis who are causing the continued suffering, where there's suffering in Iraq.

But we're making good progress. I'm proud of Jerry Bremer's work. And then the—we also talked about other issues that are on his mind and my mind. The long and short of it is we had a great discussion.

Mr. Secretary-General, I'm honored you're here.

Secretary-General Annan. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I think it is fair to say that it's wonderful that I should be meeting the President soon after the return—his return from Africa, my own continent. We weren't too far away. I was in Mozambique when he was in South Africa and Botswana.

But I would want to thank the President for the interest in the continent and his determination to help defeat the AIDS pandemic. I think it is a tragedy that is not only taking away the future of Africa; it is really destroying the present.

And it's a disease that takes parents away from children, teachers away from students, doctors away from hospitals. So the effort that is going in is absolutely worthwhile. And at the African Union Summit, this topic was very much on everyone's mind.

We also discussed, as the President has indicated, the situation in Liberia. And I'm satisfied with the discussions we've had and the approach the U.S. Government is taking. And of course, there is an assessment team in west Africa, but we have more or less agreed to a general approach on the Liberian issue, and I'm very pleased with that.

We talked about at least where the President's leadership has made a difference. Over the past couple of weeks, things are going in the right direction. We have bumps in the road, but I think, with the determination of the leaders and the support of the international community, we will make progress on this very difficult issue.

In Iraq, we were encouraged to see the formation of the Governing Council yesterday. And I must say that my special representative, Sergio de Mello, and Mr. Bremer are working very well together.

And on the Hill, I indicated that regardless of the differences that existed between nations before the war, now we have a challenge. The challenge is to stabilize Iraq, to help Iraq to become a peaceful, stable, and prosperous state. And I think everyone needs to help. An Iraq that is at peace with itself and its neighbors is in the interest of the neighbors and the entire international community.

So I would want to see the entire community, international community, come together

to assist the Iraqi people and to help us stabilize a region.

The President. Thank you, Kofi.

Quality of Intelligence/Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction

Q. Mr. President, thank you. On Iraq, what steps are being taken to ensure that questionable information like the Africa uranium material doesn't come to your desk and wind up in your speeches?

The President. Well, let me first say that, you know, I think the intelligence I get is darn good intelligence. And the speeches I have given were backed by good intelligence. And I am absolutely convinced today, like I was convinced when I gave the speeches, that Saddam Hussein developed a program of weapons of mass destruction and that our country made the right decision.

We worked with the United Nations—as Kofi mentioned, not all nations agreed with the decision, but we worked with the United Nations. And Saddam Hussein did not comply. And it's the same intelligence, by the way, that my predecessor used to make the decision he made in 1998.

We are in the process now of interrogating people inside of Iraq to—and looking at documents, exploring documents to determine the extent that—what we can find as quickly as possible. And I believe, firmly believe, that when it's all said and done, the people of the United States and the world will realize that Saddam Hussein had a weapons program.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Liberia

Q. On Liberia, are you now telling us that you will send U.S. troops to Liberia, and how many, and when will this happen?

The President. Yes, see, that's—what I'm telling you is that we want to help ECOWAS. It may require troops, but we don't know how many yet. And therefore, it's hard for me to make a determination until I've seen all the facts. And as Kofi mentioned, there's still—or the Secretary-General mentioned, excuse me—[*laughter*]*—there's still—a little informal here. They are still—our teams, our military is assessing ECOWAS' strength, how soon, how quick, what kind of troops, who*

they are, to determine what is necessary from our side to fulfill the commitment I have made that we will help maintain the cease-fire.

By the way, this is conditional upon Mr. Taylor leaving. He's got to leave. I think everybody understands that. We discussed that, by the way, in Nigeria, with President Obasanjo, who clearly understands that as well. But we're still, Steve, determining the facts. It is very difficult for me to make a decision until I see the facts.

Q. Well, when do you think—

The President. Well, I don't know. That's an interesting question. We asked that question today at a national security briefing. And as soon as we can get it, there is—the Secretary-General has been very helpful in urging nations to move forward with those plans. We hear numbers all the time as to—you know, Nigeria may be able to contribute this, or so and so may be able to contribute that. Maybe you'd like to answer the question—I mean, as soon as possible is the answer. We'd like to get the assessment teams. There has been two such teams out and about, and we'd like to get the information as soon as possible.

Secretary-General Annan. And Jacques Klein is going to be the special representative—the gentleman with the red tie—in Liberia. So you'll be seeing a lot of him, and you can talk to him.

Q. No long-term commitments—

The President. Correct. I think everybody understands, any commitment we had would be limited in size and limited in tenure. Our job would be to help facilitate an ECOWAS presence which would then be converted into a U.N. peacekeeping mission.

Secretary-General Annan. Maybe I should add something here. The understanding which is emerging now is for the ECOWAS forces to send in a vanguard of about 1,000 to 1,500 troops. And I think this is something that they have worked out amongst themselves and now discussing in Accra with the—also with the U.S. team. After that, from what I gather, Taylor—President Taylor will leave Liberia, and then the force will be strengthened, hopefully with U.S. participation and additional troops from the west African region. And eventually, the

U.N. blue helmets will be set up to stabilize the situation, along the lines that we've done in Sierra Leone, and once the situation is calmer and stabilized, the U.S. would leave and the U.N. peacekeepers would carry on the operation.

The President. Yes, Dana [Dana Bash, CNN], one last question.

State of the Union Address

Q. Mr. President, back on the question of Iraq and that specific line that has been in question—

The President. Can you cite the line? [Laughter]

Q. Really? I could, if you gave me time.

The President. When I gave the speech, the line was relevant.

Q. So even though there has been some question about the intelligence—the intelligence community knowing beforehand that perhaps it wasn't, you still believe that when you gave it—

The President. Well, the speech that I gave was cleared by the CIA. And look, I mean, the thing that's important to realize is that we're constantly gathering data. Subsequent to the speech, the CIA had some doubts. But when I gave the—when they talked about the speech and when they looked at the speech, it was cleared. Otherwise, I wouldn't have put it in the speech. I'm not interested in talking about intelligence unless it's cleared by the CIA. And as Director Tenet said, it was cleared by the CIA.

The larger point is, and the fundamental question is, did Saddam Hussein have a weapons program? And the answer is: Absolutely. And we gave him a chance to allow the inspectors in, and he wouldn't let them in. And therefore, after a reasonable request, we decided to remove him from power, along with other nations, so as to make sure he was not a threat to the United States and our friends and allies in the region. I firmly believe the decisions we made will make America more secure and the world more peaceful.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:11 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to President Charles Taylor of Liberia; L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria. Secretary-General Annan referred to Sergio Vieira de Mello, U.N. Special Representative for Iraq; and Ambassador Jacques Klein, U.N. Special Representative for Liberia.

Statement on the Establishment of the Iraqi Governing Council

July 14, 2003

The establishment of the Iraqi Governing Council is an important step forward in the ongoing transition from ruthless dictatorship to a free and democratic Iraq with Iraqis determining their own future. We look forward to working with the Council as it moves toward a democratic and prosperous Iraq, at peace with its neighbors.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Provide Bill Emerson and Mickey Leland Hunger Fellowships

July 14, 2003

Today I am signing into law H.R. 2474, which would permit the Congressional Hunger Center to spend up to \$3 million in funds appropriated for each of fiscal years 2003 and 2004 to provide Bill Emerson and Mickey Leland Hunger Fellowships.

Upon signing the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 on May 13, 2002, I stated that the method of appointing members to the Board of Trustees for the Hunger Fellowship Program runs afoul of the Appointments Clause of the Constitution. The current legislation does not adequately address this constitutional problem, in that it simply provides that the Hunger Fellowship Program will be administered for 2 years by a private, nonprofit corporation, the Congressional Hunger Center. Again, I remain prepared to work with the Congress on legislation that will provide a long-term solution for this constitutional infirmity. To avoid any constitutional concerns stemming from the

provision of funds to the Congressional Hunger Center, I instruct the head of the department to whose agency these funds are appropriated to treat the money as a grant and ensure the Center's compliance with the terms of its grant.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 14, 2003.

NOTE: H.R. 2474, approved July 14, was assigned Public Law No. 108-58. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting Proposed Legislation
To Implement the United States-
Chile Free Trade Agreement**

July 15, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the United States-Chile Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Agreement will further open Chile's markets for U.S. manufactured goods, agricultural products, services, and investors. It will increase competition and consumer choice. The FTA will enhance prosperity in the United States and Chile, serve the interest of expanding U.S. commerce, and advance our overall national interest.

The U.S.-Chile FTA is the first United States free trade agreement with a South American country. We hope the FTA will add momentum to Chile's continued implementation of the free market economic policies that have made Chile a model for its Latin American neighbors. This Agreement will also encourage other countries in the Western Hemisphere to follow Chile's path, furthering our efforts to establish a Free Trade Area of the Americas.

My Administration is strongly committed to securing a level playing field for America's workers, farmers, and businesses. The Congress helped advance that policy by passing Trade Promotion Authority in the Trade Act of 2002 (the "Trade Act"). The Congress can help us take another important step by approving this Agreement and the imple-

menting legislation. United States workers and businesses are currently at a competitive disadvantage in the Chilean market. Chile is an associate member in Mercosur and has FTAs with many other countries, including Canada, Mexico, and the 15 members of the European Union. Securing an FTA with Chile will ensure that U.S. workers and businesses will receive treatment in the Chilean market that is as good as or better than their competitors.

In negotiating this FTA, my Administration was guided by the negotiating objectives set out in the Trade Act. More than 85 percent of trade in consumer and industrial goods between the United States and Chile will be free of duties immediately upon implementation, and most remaining tariffs on U.S. exports to Chile will be eliminated within 4 years after that. More than three-quarters of U.S. farm goods will enter Chile duty free within 4 years and all duties on such goods will be phased out over 12 years. At the same time, the Agreement includes measures to ensure that U.S. firms and farmers have an opportunity to adjust to imports from Chile.

This Agreement opens opportunities for our services businesses, which now account for nearly 65 percent of our gross domestic product and more than 80 percent of employment in the United States. Chile will grant substantial market access to U.S. firms across nearly the entire spectrum of services, including banking, insurance, securities and related financial services, express delivery services, professional services, and telecommunications.

This Agreement provides for state-of-the-art intellectual property protection and recognizes the importance of trade in the digital age by including significant commitments on trade in digital products. In addition, it ensures that electronic commerce will stay free of duties and discriminatory rules.

United States citizens and businesses that invest in Chile will have significant increased protections. This Agreement promotes rule of law and enhances transparency and openness in order to foster a more secure environment for trade and investment. Furthermore,

Chile will provide U.S. investors with important substantive protections that Chilean investors already enjoy in the United States.

The United States and Chile have also agreed to cooperate on environment and labor issues and to establish mechanisms to support those efforts. A number of important cooperative projects that will promote environmental protection are identified for future work. The FTA encourages the adoption of high labor and environmental standards, obligates each country to enforce its own labor and environmental laws, and makes clear that domestic labor and environmental protections may not be reduced in order to encourage trade or investment. The Agreement also preserves our right to pursue other legitimate domestic objectives, including the protection of health and safety, consumer interests, and national security.

Trade and openness contribute to development, the rule of law, economic growth, and international cooperation. Chile is a close partner of the United States, and this Agreement will strengthen those ties.

With the approval of this Agreement and passage of the implementing legislation by the Congress, we will advance U.S. economic and political interests, while encouraging others to work with us to expand free trade around the world.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 15, 2003.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting Proposed Legislation
To Implement the United States-
Singapore Free Trade Agreement**
July 15, 2003

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Agreement will further open Singapore's markets and increase competition and consumer choice. This is America's first FTA with an Asian-Pacific nation, and we hope it will serve as a benchmark for future free trade agreements with other

nations in the region. The Agreement will enhance prosperity in the United States and Singapore, serve the interest of expanding U.S. commerce, and advance our overall national interest.

My Administration is strongly committed to securing a level playing field for America's workers, farmers, and businesses. The Congress helped advance that policy by passing Trade Promotion Authority in the Trade Act of 2002 (the "Trade Act"). The Congress can help us take another important step by approving this Agreement and the implementing legislation. Without this Agreement, U.S. workers and businesses could be placed at a competitive disadvantage, because Singapore has signed or is currently working on free trade agreements with Japan, Canada, Australia, Mexico, and India.

In negotiating this FTA, my Administration was guided by the negotiating objectives set out in the Trade Act. The Agreement locks in tariff-free access for all U.S. goods, including textile and agriculture products, and addresses other barriers to trade. It opens opportunities for our services businesses, which now account for nearly 65 percent of our gross domestic product and more than 80 percent of employment in the United States. Through this FTA, Singapore will grant substantial additional market access to U.S. firms across a broad spectrum of services, including banking, insurance, securities and related financial services, express delivery services, professional services, and telecommunications. The Agreement also incorporates commitments on regulatory transparency that will be of special help to services business.

This Agreement provides state-of-the-art intellectual property protection, including significant commitments on trade in digital products. It ensures that electronic commerce will stay free of duties and discriminatory rules. In addition, Singapore will accede to international treaties dealing with copyright and access issues for the Internet.

United States citizens and businesses that invest in Singapore will have significant increased protections. This Agreement enhances transparency and openness in order to foster a more secure environment for

trade and investment. Furthermore, Singapore will provide U.S. investors with important substantive protections that Singaporean investors already enjoy in the United States.

Singapore and the United States have also agreed to cooperate on the environment and labor issues and to establish mechanisms to support those efforts. The FTA obligates each country to enforce its own labor and environmental laws and makes clear that domestic labor or environmental protections may not be reduced in order to encourage trade or investment. The Agreement also preserves our right to pursue other legitimate domestic objectives, including the protection of health and safety, consumer interests, and national security.

Trade and openness contribute to development, the rule of law, economic growth, and international cooperation. Singapore is a close partner of the United States, and this Agreement will strengthen those ties.

With the approval of this Agreement and passage of the implementing legislation by the Congress, we will advance U.S. economic, security, and political interests, while encouraging others to work with us to expand free trade around the world.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 15, 2003.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Requests To Change Appropriations Law and a Budget Amendment for the Department of Veterans Affairs

July 15, 2003

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests to change FY 2003 appropriations law and an FY 2004 budget amendment for the Department of Veterans Affairs, none of which will affect budget levels.

The details of these requests are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 16. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks to Urban Leaders

July 16, 2003

I thank you all for coming. I'm joined by some pretty distinguished company up here. I want to thank my friends the social entrepreneurs of America—[*laughter*—for standing up here today. I want to talk about a couple of subjects.

First, I want to introduce Condoleezza Rice, my National Security Adviser, who, as I understand it, is going to stay afterwards and answer some questions about our trip, that I appreciate you doing.

Let's talk about the values that make our country unique and different. We love freedom here in America. We believe freedom is God's gift to every single individual, and we believe in the worth of each individual. We believe in human dignity, and we believe where we find hopelessness and suffering, we shall not turn our back. That's what we believe.

And there are—in this land of plenty, there are people who hurt, people who wonder whether or not the American experience, what they call the American Dream, is meant for them. And I believe the American Dream is meant for everybody. And when we find there's doubt, we've got to bring light and hope, and so that's what we're here to talk about today. And the men up here represent a representative sample of what we call the faith community in America, people who first and foremost have been called because of a calling much higher than government.

I say "social entrepreneurs" because, in many of our faith institutions, we find people who are willing to reach out in the neighborhood in which they exist to help those who hurt and those who are in need. They're willing to take a new tack, a tack based upon faith, to heal hearts and provide hope and provide inspiration, so that the American Dream is available in every corner in America. And where we find those programs which are effective, society ought to support those programs.

What I'm saying is, we ought not to fear faith. We ought not to discriminate against faith-based programs. We ought to welcome what I call neighborhood healers in the compassionate delivery of help so that people can experience the greatness of our country.

Of course, that then leads to the question of public money, taxpayers' money. My attitude is, taxpayers' money should and must fund effective programs, effective faith-based programs, so long as those services go to anybody in need. We ought to focus on—we ought to ask the question in our society, "Is the faith-based program working," not focus on the fact that it's a faith-based program.

The Government, as it gives support, as it provides help to the faith-based program and in return asks for help for solving social problems, as it does that, it should never discriminate. It should never cause the faith-based program to lose its character or to compromise the mission. That's the basic principles of the Faith-Based Initiative which you've heard a lot about. Really what we're doing is, we're signing up the armies of compassion which already exist and saying, "What can we do to help you fulfill your calling and your mission?" That's really what we're doing.

I signed an Executive order banning discrimination against faith-based charities by Federal agencies. We waited for Congress to act. They couldn't act on the issue. So I just went ahead and signed an Executive order which will unleash—which says the Federal agencies will not discriminate against faith-based programs. They ought to welcome the armies of compassion as opposed to turning them away.

I know you've heard from some of my key Cabinet Secretaries. Within their secretariat are offices designed to speak up for, defend, and empower faith-based groups, specially created within the bureaucracy.

Look, I fully understand the issue, the frustration some face. And it's a frustration based upon a long practice here at the Federal level, and that is, there's no place for faith-based programs and trying to help people in need. And therefore, we'll discriminate, shove out of the way, not deal with, make it hard for, create barriers to entry. And my administration is absolutely committed to

reducing those barriers to entry. And we've created these offices whose sole function it is to, one, recognize the power of faith and, two, recognize there are fantastic programs all throughout the country on a variety of subjects, all based upon faith, all changing lives, all making American life better, and therefore, folks would be enlisted in making sure the American Dream extends throughout our society.

And let me give you some examples, particularly those who might be tuning in to this moment. People—"What do you mean by faith-based discrimination?" Well, in Seattle, there was an earthquake, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency gave disaster relief funds to schools but denied them to the Seattle Hebrew Academy. In other words, schools—public schools got the funds from FEMA, but not a religious school. And so, we've changed that rule. That's the kind of discrimination that I—that may make some sense to people who are not exactly sure what I'm talking about.

Another interesting example is, in Boston, the Old North Church, the famous historic landmark, needed preservation funds; yet it was denied Federal help because it was a church. And that's not right. That's not right. It makes no sense, and therefore, we're changing those kinds of rules.

And we're also making sure that Federal monies are available. It's one thing to talk about a Faith-Based Initiative, but there needs to be money in the system available for the faith-based programs in order for—to make it work. And that's money that's coming out of these agencies already. I mean, there's—we spend a lot of money here in Washington, and that—monies ought to be accessible to effective faith-based programs which heal people from all walks of life. It's—money is not going to proselytize; money is going to save lives.

And let me give you some examples of what is working today, maybe examples that you already have heard about, particularly when you go to the White House conferences as we try to describe how to access the system.

In Columbus, Ohio, St. Stephen's Community House—faith-based program—is

using a—nearly \$1 million from the Department of Education to expand its after-school program. There's kind of an interesting use of education dollars that will help faith-based programs fulfill their mission.

The Frederick Douglass Community Development Corporation, started by the Memorial AME Zion Church in Rochester, New York, has received more than \$5 million from HUD to build low-income houses for seniors. The AME Church decided to do something about the housing issue, as far as the seniors go in their congregation, and accessed Federal money and put together a housing project. Now a lot of people don't—when they think about the AME Church or any church for that matter, they don't think housing. Except I know some social entrepreneurs from my State—right, Evans?²—[laughter]—who have used their facilities, their skills to go ahead and to build homes.

The Operation New Hope and City Center Ministries in Jacksonville, Florida, and the Exodus Transitional Community in East Harlem went to the Department of Labor, and they received labor funds for job training programs for ex-offenders. A person gets out of prison, checks in at the church, and the church says, "Wait, we want to help you get back into society; not only will there be some lessons to be learned, but also, here's some training money. Here's a training course." So it's a practical application of taxpayers' money to meet societal needs. And one of the greatest societal needs is we have is to make sure our—you know, a guy who's spent time in the pen not only receives spiritual guidance and love, but spiritual guidance and love can only go so far. And it's also helpful to have him be trained in a job which exists. In other words, there's practical application of taxpayers' money that we want to get into the hands of our faith-based organizations all throughout our society.

People say, "Well, we're already doing that." Now, what's happening is that the same programs are being funded over and over and over again. In other words, there's kind of a rut. And that doesn't encourage the entrepreneurial spirit that we're interested in.

So one of the things we've done here in the White House to deal with this issue is

we've started—and Jim Towey is—we've got an office dedicated, by the way, to the Faith-Based Initiative. And we've started White House conferences to explain to people how the process works. And Towey handed me this book when I came in. These are the different pots of money, if you will, that are accessible to the faith community so that you can help fund the programs.

Now, look, we've got to do a better job of making sure that we explain what we mean by the Faith-Based Initiative. I understand that. It requires education. People can read everything they want into it. When they hear "Faith-Based Initiative," they—that all of a sudden opens everybody's imagination in the world to vast possibilities, some which exist and some which don't. [Laughter]

And so therefore we're reaching out to explain to people the practical applications. The Compassion—Capital Compassion Fund, which Congress has funded—I've asked for \$100 million; they gave it 30 million and 35 million over the last 2 years—but that money goes to help smaller charities learn how to fill out grants, learn what it means to access Federal monies.

It's one thing for people, however, to learn how to fill out a grant. It's another thing to have the grant fall on deaf ears. So we're also changing habits here in Washington, DC. And that's what the office of the—within these departments are all designed to do, to facilitate, to make it easier for people to access, to make sure that we really do tap the heart and soul of our country.

Evans—Tony Evans first kind of woke me up to this. We were in Greenville, Texas, together, and he said, "The best welfare programs already exist on the street corners of inner-city Dallas," in this case. "They're open 24 hours a day. They've got a fantastic guidebook"—[laughter]—"been around a long time." [Laughter] "The motto of the work force is clear: Love your neighbor." And it dawned on me how true he is. There's no need to reinvent. We've got it in place. And so therefore, when I lay out an initiative that talks about saving the lives of drug offenders, really what I'm saying is, is that I understand that when you change a person's heart, you can change their habits. So let's enlist it, the

faith community, on the goal of saving people's lives who happen to be hooked on drugs.

Six hundred million dollars over 3 years—I would hope that the faith community gets very much involved when Congress funds this. And by the way, part of this mission is for me to remind Congress they need to fund it. But once funded, it's very important for the faith community to be involved. The 10-step program is a faith initiative, when you really think about the—how it works. And I know many of you who run churches and synagogues and mosques in America are worried about addiction in your neighborhoods. And we want to help because we believe—we know—that some of the most effective programs are those that work when a heart is changed.

I've also laid out a mentoring initiative. I would love to have every child who has a mother or dad in prison to have a mentor. The most vulnerable of our population are those who may have a mom or a dad incarcerated. And they need love. They need a lot of love. And the best way to provide love is to find somebody who's willing to love them through a mentoring program.

I went to the Amachi program in Philadelphia—perhaps you all know about it—out of the Bright Hope Baptist Church, saw the program that works. There's a lot of initiatives around from the faith-based program that track the child who needs to be mentored. And the best place to find mentors, of course, is you can find them every Sunday. But we need help to make sure the program works. And so Congress I've asked to get this program moving.

My point is, we've got some Federal initiatives, job training, education, addiction. We've got a housing initiative here, by the way, that I'm deeply concerned about, what they call a minority gap in America. Too many—relative to the Anglo community, too many minorities don't own their own homes. I believe in an ownership society. I know when somebody owns their home, they've got such a fantastic stake in the future.

The faith community can help in homeownership. The Federal Government's got to help a lot here. We've got to make sure there is more affordable homes. We've got to pro-

vide tax incentives for people to build homes in inner cities. We've got to have downpayment help. And we've got to make sure that the contracts—I can understand somebody, a first-time homebuyer, getting a little nervous when they pull up the contract and the print's about that big, and nobody understands what's in the print. And a lot of people don't want to sign something they're not sure what it's about. And so we've got education programs through our housing institutions to teach people what it means to buy a home and how to help them access the downpayment help and also to make sure the contracts are clear and understandable.

This is a mission at home, is to help people. And you know, Government can help. I like to say, Government can pass out money, but it cannot put hope in people's hearts or purpose in people's lives. And that's why it's vital for our country to count on those who can put hope in people's hearts and a sense of purpose in people's lives, and that's our faith community.

You know, we will accomplish a lot here at home if we use all the resources available to our communities. And I will tell—continue to tell the American people, one of the great untapped resources for Government is to work side by side with the faith community. And I want to thank you all for your—hearing the call.

Now, look, before I end, I do want to also remind you that we will not turn our back on people who suffer in the world as well. I have just come from Africa, and I'd like to share some thoughts, if you don't mind.

First—and Condi was traveling with me, of course. I don't dare go overseas without her. [*Laughter*] At Goree Island, we stood at the Point of No Return, and it was a moving moment for our entire delegation. I went to Auschwitz earlier, and then I went to here, and it reminded me of the capacity for mankind to be cruel.

But the interesting thing that I've come to realize, that I spoke at Goree Island, was, those who were sent to America as slaves and their ancestors who lived in a segregated society stood strong, never gave up faith, and in fact, helped America find her soul and her conscience.

It's an interesting historical twist, when you think about it. Those who were chained, sent in those ships, separated from their families, those who were really beaten down, never lost their spirit, never lost their desire for freedom and hope, stood strong in the face of the oppressor, finally made the oppressor feel guilty, and in fact made us realize what it meant, "liberty and justice for all."

South Africa and Botswana and Uganda and Nigeria—and by the way, it took a long time to fly from Senegal to South Africa. [Laughter] It took longer to fly from Senegal to South Africa than it took from America to Senegal, which means we're covering a lot of country. [Laughter]

It's a continent of vast potential, is the way I'd like to describe it, a continent of possibility. And it's in our national interest that Africa do well. Africa has got to deal with a lot of issues. And first of all, the policy of this Government is to understand Africans are plenty capable of dealing with issues themselves; they just need help.

So for example, when it comes to helping deal with regional conflicts, one of the things we've got to do is help train their militaries so that they've got the capacity to move in and separate warring factions. One of the problems Africa faces, of course, is there is—every time there's a civil war, there's a lot of hurt, death, displacement. It makes it awfully hard for a society to function that is at war with itself, as you know.

In those countries, I was struck by its potential and struck by the issues that are faced, one—education issues and health issues of course—no bigger issue in my judgment, however, than the pandemic of HIV/AIDS. And we live in an amazing world, and yet in the midst of our world, there's a lot of folks who are dying and will die. And it's time for the United States of America to act and act in a big way, which is what we're going to do.

Reverend Rivers went over just to make sure that I fulfilled my promise. He was watching my every move. [Laughter] I asked for 15 billion. Now let me just give you a quick update; then Condi will be glad to answer any other questions you have about the trip.

Some countries are prepared for our aid. As a matter of fact, a lot of countries are. And that was a very important question to ask. If in fact we fund—and we will fund, and I want to thank you for your help in convincing Congress that they've got to fund the initiative. As you know, we have authorized it. Now they've got to write the check. And we will—we will. But it was very important for us to see whether or not the—for example, the capacity to distribute antiretrovirals was in place. Nothing worse than stockpiling medicines that never get distributed to the actual people. We're not interested in helping organizations. We're interested in helping organizations actually get the medicine to the people.

And we saw a good infrastructure. The Catholic Church, for example, in Uganda is fully prepared to pave the way for distribution of antiretrovirals, at the same time help with education and prevention.

The first step, by the way, is for leadership to stand up and admit there is an issue. You've got to admit there's a problem. And most of the societies that we saw admitted there's a significant problem, starting with the leaders. You know, President Museveni of Uganda and President Obasanjo of Nigeria are very strong and said, "We've got an issue. Forget stigma. We've got a health issue that we must deal with as a society."

And so, in America, the first thing we do is look for willingness to participate, and we saw some strong leadership, which is really important. The attitudes are changing on the continent.

Secondly, we're looking for infrastructure, people who understand what works. You, know, there's an interesting effect with the antiretroviral drugs. It's called the Lazarus effect. And if we can get those antiretrovirals out, and people begin to—out in the country and in the cities, of course—people begin to improve, and all of a sudden, somebody sees a neighbor improving: "Well, maybe I've got hope." So hope begins to rise.

And so, we've got to get these medicines out, and we've got to get a strategy out and a plan out. And what I'm telling you is, we saw some good strategies and some good plans proposed by strong leaders, which is a very heartening thing. Our taxpayers have

got to know that when we spend that money, it's going to go to save lives.

The other key component, interestingly enough, in Africa that's going to make a huge difference is the faith-based community. The faith-based community from all religions, all walks of life, are interested in being a part of this—solving this pandemic.

And the other issue is hunger. Our country puts a billion a year up to help feed the hungry. And we're by far the most generous nation in the world when it comes to that, and I'm proud to report that. This isn't a contest of who's the most generous. I'm just telling you as an aside. [*Laughter*] We're generous. We shouldn't be bragging about it. But we are. We're very generous.

However, one of the things it seems like we've got to do is help Africa feed herself. There is no reason in the world why the great continent of Africa can't be self-sustaining in food, and not only self-sustaining; how about being—the capacity to help others eat. And it's got a great potential.

So that's the mission. The mission at home is to help those who hurt and make the vast potential of America available to every citizen. The mission abroad is to use our good heart and good conscience and not turn our back away when we see suffering.

It has been a—it's a huge honor to represent our country overseas. It is a—I am a proud American. I'm proud of what we stand for. I'm proud of our heritage. I understand we've had tough times in our history. But the thing about it is, we never get stuck in history. We always move beyond. We're always trying to improve. And we base it, our history and our decisionmaking, our future, on solid values. The first value is, we're all God's children.

May God bless you. Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:27 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Tony Evans, Oakcliff Baptist Church, Dallas, TX; Rev. Eugene F. Rivers III, Azusa Christian Community, Dorchester, MA; President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the “Project BioShield Act of 2003”

July 16, 2003

In my State of the Union Address, I outlined a major research and production effort called Project BioShield to better protect the American people against possible bioterrorist attacks. I commend the House for passing the “Project BioShield Act of 2003.” This legislation will help spur the development and availability of next generation countermeasures against biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons. I urge the Senate to act on this very important legislation.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

July 16, 2003

Dear _____:

Consistent with section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114), (the “Act”), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond August 1, 2003, of the right to bring action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom

July 17, 2003

President Bush. Good afternoon. It is, once again, a pleasure to welcome the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and Cherie Blair to the White House. Mr. Prime Minister, fabulous speech. Congratulations.

In his address to Congress this afternoon, Prime Minister Blair once again showed the qualities that have marked his entire career. Tony Blair is a leader of conviction, of passion, of moral clarity, and eloquence. He is a true friend of the American people. The United Kingdom has produced some of the world's most distinguished statesmen, and I'm proud to be standing with one of them today.

The close partnership between the United States and Great Britain has been and remains essential to the peace and security of all nations. For more than 40 years of the cold war, we stood together to ensure that the conflicts of Europe did not once again destroy the peace of the world. The duties we accepted were demanding, as we found during the Berlin blockade and other crises. Yet British and American leaders held firm, and our cause prevailed.

Now we are joined in another great and difficult mission. On September the 11th, 2001, America, Britain, and all free nations saw how the ideologies of hatred and terror in a distant part of the world could bring violence and grief to our own citizens. We resolved to fight these threats actively, wherever they gather, before they reach our shores. And we resolved to oppose these threats by promoting freedom and democracy in the Middle East, a region that has known so much bitterness and resentment.

From the outset, the Prime Minister and I have understood that we are allies in this war, a war requiring great effort and patience and fortitude. The British and American peoples will hold firm once again, and we will prevail.

The United States and Great Britain have conducted a steady offensive against terrorist networks and terror regimes. We're dismantling the Al Qaida network, leader by leader,

and we're hunting down the terrorist killers, one by one.

In Afghanistan, we removed the cruel and oppressive regime that had turned that country into a training camp for Al Qaida, and now we are helping the Afghan people to restore their nation and regain self-government.

In Iraq, the United States, Britain, and other nations confronted a violent regime that armed to threaten the peace, that cultivated ties to terror and defied the clear demands of the United Nations Security Council. Saddam Hussein produced and possessed chemical and biological weapons and was trying to reconstitute his nuclear weapons program. He used chemical weapons in acts of murder against his own people.

The U.N. Security Council, acting on information it had acquired over many years, passed more than a dozen resolutions demanding that the dictator reveal and destroy all of his prohibited weapons. A final Security Council resolution promised serious consequences if he continued his defiance. The former dictator of Iraq chose his course of action, and for the sake of peace and security, we chose ours.

The Prime Minister and I have no greater responsibility than to protect the lives and security of the people we serve. The regime of Saddam Hussein was a grave and growing threat. Given Saddam's history of violence and aggression, it would have been reckless to place our trust in his sanity or his restraint. As long as I hold this office, I will never risk the lives of American citizens by assuming the good will of dangerous enemies.

Acting together, the United States, Great Britain, and our coalition partners enforced the demands of the world. We ended the threat from Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction. We rid the Middle East of an aggressive, destabilizing regime. We liberated nearly 25 million people from decades of oppression, and we are now helping the Iraqi people to build a free nation.

In Iraq, as elsewhere, freedom and self-government are hated and opposed by a radical and ruthless few. American, British, and other forces are facing remnants of a fallen regime and other extremists. Their attacks follow a pattern. They target progress and

success. They strike at Iraqi police officers who have been trained to enforce order. They sabotage Iraqi power grids that we're rebuilding. They are the enemies of the Iraqi people.

Defeating these terrorists is an essential commitment on the war on terror. This is a duty we accept. This is a fight we will win. We are being tested in Iraq. Our enemies are looking for signs of hesitation. They're looking for weakness. They will find none. Instead, our forces in Iraq are finding these killers and bringing them to justice.

And we will finish the task of helping Iraqis make the challenging transition to democracy. Iraq's governing council is now meeting regularly. Soon the council will nominate ministers and propose a budget. After decades of tyranny, the institutions of democracy will take time to create. America and Britain will help the Iraqi people as long as necessary. Prime Minister Blair and I have the same goal: The Government and the future of Iraq will be in the hands of the people of Iraq.

The creation of a strong and stable Iraqi democracy is not easy, but it's an essential part on the war against terror. A free Iraq will be an example to the entire Middle East, and the advance of liberty in the Middle East will undermine the ideologies of terror and hatred. It will help strengthen the security of America and Britain and many other nations.

By helping to build and secure a free Iraq, by accepting the risks and sacrifice, our men and women in uniform are protecting our own countries, and they're giving essential service in the war on terror. This is the work history has given us, and we will complete it.

We're seeing movement toward reform and freedom in other parts of the Middle East. The leadership and courage of Prime Minister Abbas and Prime Minister Sharon are giving their peoples new hope for progress. Other nations can add to the momentum of peace by fighting terror in all its forms. A Palestinian state will be built upon hope and reform, not built upon violence.

Terrorists are the chief enemies of Palestinian aspirations. The sooner terrorism is rooted out by all the governments in the re-

gion, the sooner the Palestinian flag will rise over a peaceful Palestinian state.

The spread of liberty in Afghanistan and Iraq and across the Middle East will mark a hopeful turn in the history of our time. Great Britain and America will achieve this goal together. And one of the reasons I'm confident in our success is because the character and the leadership of Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you, Mr. President. And first of all, as I did a short time ago, I would like to pay tribute to your leadership in these difficult times, because ever since September the 11th, the task of leadership has been an arduous one, and I believe that you have fulfilled it with tremendous conviction, determination, and courage.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Prime Minister Blair. And I think it's as well that we understand how this has all come about. It came about because we realized that there was a new source of threat and insecurity in our world that we had to counter. And as I was saying in my speech to Congress, this threat is sometimes hard for people to understand, because it's of such a different nature than the threats we have faced before, but September the 11th taught us it was real.

And when you lead countries, as we both do, and you see the potential for this threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction to come together, I really don't believe that any responsible leader could ignore the evidence that we see or the threat that we face. And that's why we've taken the action that we have, first in Afghanistan and now in Iraq.

And in Afghanistan, we acted to remove the Taliban, and we still pursue the Al Qaida terrorist network there and in other parts of the world. But there is no doubt at all that but for that action, Al Qaida would have retained its central place of command and control which now is denied to it.

And in respect to Iraq, we should not forget Resolution 1441 that was passed in the United Nations, in which the entire international community accepted the threat that Iraq constituted.

I think it's just worth pointing out, in these last few days, Iraq has had a governing council established, with the help of the United Nations representative Sergio de Mello, and in the last 2 weeks, the United Nations has spoken about the numbers of missing people and mass graves. And that number, just on the present count, is round about 300,000 people.

So let us be clear: We have been dealing with a situation in which the threat was very clear and the person, Saddam Hussein, wielding that threat, someone of total brutality and ruthlessness, with no compunction about killing his own people or those of another nation.

And of course, it's difficult to reconstruct Iraq. It's going to be a hard task. We never expected otherwise. But as the President has said to you a moment or two ago, the benefit of that reconstruction will be felt far beyond the territory of Iraq. It is, as I said earlier today, an indispensable part of bringing about a new settlement in the whole of the Middle East.

And I would also pay tribute to the President's leadership in the Middle East and in rekindling the prospect of the Middle East peace process. If I can remind people, I think many people were cynical as to whether this could ever be rekindled. Many people doubted whether the commitment was there, to fairness for Palestinian people as well as to the state of Israel. And yet the President has stated very clearly the goal of a two-state solution. And now we actually have the first steps, albeit tentative, towards achieving that.

And when I met Prime Minister Sharon in London a few nights ago, I was more than ever convinced that if we could provide the right framework within which these tentative steps are made, then we do genuinely have the prospect of making progress there.

And then, again, as I was saying earlier, the commitment that America has now given, that the President has given, in respect of Africa, in tackling some of the poorest parts of our world, is again a sign of hope. And all these things are changing our world. And however difficult the change may be, I genuinely believe it is change for the better.

So I am honored once again to be here in the White House with you, Mr. President.

As I said earlier, we are allies, and we are friends. And I believe that the work that we are embarked upon is difficult but is essential, and so far as we are concerned, we shall hold to it, ride the way through.

President Bush. We'll take a couple of questions. Tom [Tom Raum, Associated Press].

Responsibility for the War on Terror/ Coalition in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, others in your administration have said your words on Iraq and Africa did not belong in your State of the Union Address. Will you take personal responsibility for those words? And the both of you, how is it that two major world leaders such as yourselves have had such a hard time persuading other major powers to help stabilize Iraq?

President Bush. First, I take responsibility for putting our troops into action. And I made that decision because Saddam Hussein was a threat to our security and a threat to the security of other nations.

I take responsibility for making the decision, the tough decision, to put together a coalition to remove Saddam Hussein, because the intelligence, not only our intelligence but the intelligence of this great country, made a clear and compelling case that Saddam Hussein was a threat to security and peace.

I say that because he possessed chemical weapons and biological weapons. I strongly believe he was trying to reconstitute his nuclear weapons program. And I will remind the skeptics that in 1991, it became clear that Saddam Hussein was much closer to developing a nuclear weapon than anybody ever imagined. He was a threat. I take responsibility for dealing with that threat.

We are in a war against terror, and we will continue to fight that war against terror. We're after Al Qaida, as the Prime Minister accurately noted, and we're dismantling Al Qaida. The removal of Saddam Hussein is an integral part of winning the war against terror. A free Iraq will make it much less likely that we'll find violence in that immediate neighborhood. A free Iraq will make it more likely we'll get a Middle Eastern

peace. A free Iraq will have incredible influence on the states that could potentially unleash terrorist activities on us. And yes, I take responsibility for making the decisions I made.

Q. Mr. President—

President Bush. Hold on for a second, please.

Prime Minister Blair. Sorry. First of all, before I answer the question you put to me about other countries helping us, let me just say this on the issue to do with Africa and uranium. The British intelligence that we had we believe is genuine. We stand by that intelligence. And one interesting fact I think people don't generally know, in case people should think that the whole idea of a link between Iraq and Niger was some invention, in the 1980s we know for sure that Iraq purchased round about 270 tons of uranium from Niger. So I think we should just factor that into our thinking there.

As for other countries, actually, other countries are coming in. We have with us now round about nine other countries who will be contributing or are contributing literally thousands of troops. I think I'm right in saying the Poles in their sector have somewhere in the region of 20 different countries offering support. And I have no doubt at all we will have international support in this. Indeed, to be fair, even to those countries that opposed the action, I think they recognize the huge importance of reconstructing Iraq.

And it's an interesting thing, I was at a European meeting just a couple of weeks ago, where, as you know, there were big differences between people over the issue of Iraq. And yet, I was struck by the absolutely unanimous view that whatever people felt about the conflict, it was obviously good that Saddam was out, and most people now recognize that the important thing is that we all work together to reconstruct Iraq for the better so that it is a free and stable country.

Adam [Adam Boulton, Sky News].

Guantanamo Bay Detainees/Andrew Gilligan

Q. I wonder if I could ask you both about one aspect of Iraq and freedom and justice which, as you know, is causing a great deal of concern in Britain and the British Par-

liament, that is, what happens now in Guantanamo Bay to the people detained there, particularly whether there's any chance that the President will return the British citizens to face British justice, as John Walker Lindh faced regular American justice?

And just on a quick point, could the Prime Minister react to the decision of the Foreign Affairs Committee tonight that the BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan is a "unsatisfactory witness"?

President Bush. You probably ought to comment on that one. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Blair. Can I just say to you on the first point, obviously, this is an issue that we will discuss when we begin our talks tonight, and we will put out a statement on that tomorrow for you.

President Bush. We will work with the Blair Government on this issue. And we're about to—after we finish answering your questions, we're going to go upstairs and discuss the issue.

Q. Do you have concerns they're not getting justice, the people detained there?

President Bush. No, the only thing I know for certain is that these are bad people, and we look forward to working closely with the Blair Government to deal with the issue.

Prime Minister Blair. On your other point, Adam, the issue here is very, very simple. The whole debate for weeks revolved around a claim that either I or a member of my staff had effectively inserted intelligence into the dossier we put before the British people against the wishes of the intelligence services. Now, that is a serious charge. It never was true. Everybody now knows that that charge is untrue. And all we are saying is, those who made that charge should simply accept that it is untrue. It's as simple as that.

President Bush. Patsy [Patricia Wilson], Reuters.

Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction

Q. In his speech to Congress, the Prime Minister opened the door to the possibility that you may be proved wrong about the threat from Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

President Bush. Yes.

Q. Do you agree, and does it matter whether or not you find these weapons?

President Bush. Well, you might ask the Prime Minister that. We won't be proven wrong—

Prime Minister Blair. No.

President Bush. I believe that we will find the truth. And the truth is, he was developing a program for weapons of mass destruction.

Now, you say, why didn't it happen all of a sudden? Well, there was a lot of chaos in the country, one; two, Saddam Hussein has spent over a decade hiding weapons and hiding materials; three, we're getting—we're just beginning to get some cooperation from some of the high-level officials in that administration or that regime.

But we will bring the weapons, and of course we will bring the information forward on the weapons when they find them. And that will end up—end all this speculation. I understand there has been a lot of speculation over in Great Britain—we've got a little bit of it here—about whether or not the—whether or not the actions were based upon valid information. We can debate that all day long until the truth shows up, and that's what's going to happen.

And we based our decisions on good, sound intelligence. And the—our people are going to find out the truth, and the truth will say that this intelligence was good intelligence. There's no doubt in my mind.

Prime Minister Blair. And—yes, if I can just correct you on one thing. I certainly did not say that I would be proved wrong. On the contrary, I said with every fiber of instinct and conviction, I believe that we are right. And let me just say this one other thing to you, because sometimes, again, in the debate in the past few weeks, it's as if, prior to the early part of this year, the issue of Saddam Hussein and weapons of mass destruction were some sort of unknown quantity, and on the basis of some speculative intelligence, we go off and take action.

The history of Saddam Hussein and weapons of mass destruction is a 12-year history and is a history of him using the weapons, developing the weapons, and concealing the weapons and not complying with the United Nations inspectors who were trying to shut down his programs. And I simply say, which

is why I totally agree with the President, it's important we wait for the Iraq survey group to complete their work. Because the proposition that actually he was not developing such weapons and such programs rests on this rather extraordinary proposition that, having for years obstructed the United Nations inspectors and concealed his programs, having finally effectively got rid of them in December '98, he then took all the problems and sanctions and action upon himself, voluntarily destroyed them, but just didn't tell anyone. I don't think that's very likely as a proposition. I really don't.

Right, Nick.

Guantanamo Bay Detainees

Q. Nick Robinson, ITV News. Mr. President, do you realize that many people hearing you say that we know these are "bad people" in Guantanamo Bay will merely fuel their doubts that the United States regards them as innocent until proven guilty and due a fair, free, and open trial?

President Bush. Well, yes—let me just say these were illegal combatants. They were picked up off the battlefield aiding and abetting the Taliban. I'm not trying to try them in front of your cameras or in your newspaper.

But we will talk with the Prime Minister about this issue. He's asked. Prior to his arrival, he said, "I want to talk about this in a serious way. Can we work with you?" And the answer is, absolutely. I understand the issue. And we will. We'll have a very good discussion about it, right after he finishes answering this aspect of your question.

Prime Minister Blair. I just think you should realize—I mean, of course, as I said a moment or two ago, we will discuss this together, and we'll put out a statement for you tomorrow. But I think, again, it's important just to realize the context in which all this arises, without saying anything about any specific case at all. And the context was a situation in which the Al Qaida and the Taliban were operating together in Afghanistan against American and British forces. So, as I say, we will discuss this issue. We will come back to it. You will have a statement tomorrow.

But I want to say just in concluding, once again, that the conviction that this threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction is the security threat our world faces has never left me. It's with me now, and I believe it to be the threat that we have to take on and defeat. I really do.

President Bush. Good job. Thank you. I appreciate your coming. [*Inaudible*]

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:29 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Cherie Blair, wife of Prime Minister Blair; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. Prime Minister Blair referred to Sergio Vieira de Mello, U.N. Special Representative for Iraq. A reporter referred to John Walker Lindh, convicted American Taliban fighter.

Statement on the Death of Celia Cruz

July 17, 2003

Celia Cruz was an international artist whose voice and talent entertained audiences around the world. Her success in the years following her departure from her beloved Cuba was a tribute to her perseverance, compassion, and love for life. Laura joins me in sending our thoughts and prayers to her family and friends.

Remarks on the HealthierUS Initiative in Dallas, Texas

July 18, 2003

Thanks a lot. Please be seated. Thanks. It is nice to be home.

I am honored to be here at Lakewest YMCA. I've got to tell you, the facility is overwhelming. It is a beautiful facility, and I appreciate so very much the hospitality and the dedicated staff here.

Listen, we're here to talk about a health care plan that makes a lot of sense. And it's a health care plan that says if you exercise and eat healthy food, you will live longer. I mean, there is a lot of talk about treating chronic diseases and finding treatments and

research and development. And that's great, and the country is on the leading edge of all kinds of new discoveries. But we've already discovered what works. And what works is to encourage people to exercise on a regular basis and to eat good foods. It's called preventative medicine. An integral part of any health care plan is to encourage people to adapt the habits necessary to avoid disease in the first place. And that's what we're here to talk about, and that is what the YMCA does, and I'm grateful for that.

And there's no better place to start in encouraging healthy choices and exercise than with our children. And so Lynn and I were honored to go to the—some of these exercise classes and were pleased to see little youngsters doing jumping jacks—with enthusiasm, I might add—[*laughter*—counting out the number of stretches.

I mean, look, the YMCA is an integral part of a healthy America by encouraging our youngsters to exercise, to have fun, to get outside, to learn to eat good foods. We're really here to thank the Y, thank the Y here in west Dallas and thank the YMCAs all across America for being an integral part of a healthy United States of America.

Ken Gladish is the president and CEO of YMCA of the entire United States. We've got the President of the United States of the Ys with us. [*Laughter*] Thank you for coming. I'm honored you're here. Gordon Echtenkamp is the president and CEO of YMCA Metropolitan Dallas. Thank you, Gordon, appreciate you being here. Jo Harris is the executive director of the Lakewest Family YMCA. Thank you, Jo, for being here.

I hope this entourage of mine didn't over-stress the organization. [*Laughter*] Turns out we don't travel lightly these days. [*Laughter*] But thanks a lot to you and your staff for opening up this facility for us to discuss health.

I'm honored that the Governor is here, Governor Rick Perry. I ran as Governor; he runs as Governor. He'll be running faster than I ran as Governor, soon. But he understands what I know: There's a lot of stress in certain jobs. I guess every job could have stress to it. There's nothing like exercise to relieve the stress, and I know Rick works out

a lot, and I thank you for setting a good example for the State of Texas, friend. Thanks for coming.

And I want to thank Congressman Sam Johnson and Congressman Michael Burgess, both here from the State of Texas, for joining us. Thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here.

In the midst of some of those Ranger losing streaks, I would get all anxious, and I would go over and visit with my friend Ken Cooper, who's got a fantastic facility which promotes exercise. He'd just say, "Run until it doesn't hurt anymore." [Laughter] And I'm honored you're here, Ken. Thanks for setting such a good example for—see, he's on the leading edge of research. He's determined a lot of simple facts. One of them is, is that if you exercise, like, 20 minutes a day, the incident of heart disease drops dramatically. That doesn't seem like much of a challenge, does it, to convince people to exercise 20 minutes a day? And that's what we're here to do.

And so I put together a group of really strong American citizens who understand the value of exercise, understand the value of health for our society, to help spread the message. And the Chairman of that, of course, is a fabulous person who happened to be a very good football player named Lynn Swann. And I appreciate you, Lynn.

And I appreciate so very much, Lynn, because he's a busy guy, and he's got a lot to do. And for him to volunteer, along with others on the Council, to help to make America a healthy place really speaks to the character of the person. And I'm honored to be associated with him. Just like I'm honored to be associated with Dr. Dot Richardson, Olympic gold medalist, surgeon, and Vice Chairwoman. Doc, thanks for coming.

As I say, we put together a really good Council, people who are out in the communities putting the word out. One guy who is here is a guy who I know has put the word out for running. Austin, Texas, is one of the greatest running cities in the country. And one of the reasons why is because Paul Carrozza, who is an entrepreneur, a business entrepreneur, started with nothing—except a good pair of legs—[laughter]—and started what they call RunTex. I know him well, and

he'd probably like me to say, if you're interested in a pair of shoes in the Austin area, drop by. [Laughter] But he has organized a lot of running clubs and really has convinced a lot of people who never would think about running or exercise to get out on Town Lake and run. And I know we've got the same type of folks here in Dallas, but Paul, thank you for your dedication to a fit America.

President of Trek Bicycle Corp. is John Burke. John is with us, been introduced now twice. But John is an entrepreneur as well who cares a lot about fitness. He recognizes there's other ways to stay fit than running, for example, like getting on a bicycle. That also counts, by the way. And I appreciate you coming, John. Thank you for being here, as well as Dr. Ted Mitchell. He works at the Cooper Clinic. He works for the Cooper Clinic Wellness Program. They take the research at Cooper Clinic and implement it into programs to get people to stay fit. And I want to thank all of you all for joining this Council, and thanks for coming. Good to see you, Doc. How's the fastball?

I appreciate Dennis Roberson, who is here with us today. Dennis is a active volunteer. The reason I like to talk about volunteers, this country of ours has got a lot of muscle, and we're strong. And we, by the way, stay strong in order to keep the peace. We will stay strong in order to promote freedom. But the truth of the matter is, the great strength of America is the heart and soul of the American citizen, people who are willing to dedicate time to make somebody else's life better, people who are willing to volunteer. And this guy, Dennis Roberson, comes here and volunteers to help teach children healthy lifestyles, to teach children how to use the computer, to teach children how to access the Internet, to teach children that a healthy body and a healthy mind will lead to a strong future.

And I want to thank you, Dennis, for setting a good example for volunteers all across the metroplex, all across our State, and all across our Nation. One of the things my job is to call people to a higher calling. And there's nothing higher than to loving a neighbor just like you would like to be loved yourself and volunteering your time to help somebody in need. Thank you, sir.

We have a problem when people don't exercise and eat bad food. Obesity can cause serious health problems, like heart disease and diabetes. And it adds to the cost of health care in America; that is a fact. In 2000 alone, obesity costs totaled the country an estimated cost of \$117 billion. Since 1980, rates of obesity have doubled among children, tripled among adolescents. Now, that is a problem, and the Nation must do something about it for the sake of our future.

We must reverse the trend, and we know how to do it. It's exercise and good dieting. Good foods and regular exercise will reverse the trend and save our country a lot of money but, more importantly, save lives.

The local Ys is a great place to start, and that's why we're here. There are other programs across the country, by the way, that encourage exercise, no doubt about it. The YMCA is on the forefront. I remember being a loyal Y member in Midland, Texas, playing basketball with a bunch of 45-year-olds. [Laughter] It was like full-court karate. [Laughter]

But here at this Y, they hook youngsters on exercise. And Andrew Simpson just gave us a tour, gave Lynn Swann and me a tour. He's a good guide. He tells me exercise not only gives him energy but, as importantly, confidence. He's a more confident person as a result of the program. He said he was always tired of being the little guy, and so he decided to work out. He's not a little guy anymore. [Laughter] He's a man who understands that when you make right choices in life, you'll have a healthier future.

The thing that I like to see, and the Y is good at this, and other programs need to understand, exercise doesn't need to be drudgery. It can be fun. It can be a fun way for people to spend their day. I love the idea of a day camp. I asked how long the day camp is. I think it's, like, 10 weeks. It's a really good idea. It's a good idea to help build up the spirit of the community. It's a good idea to give the kids something smart to do. It's a good idea to instill the habits necessary for a healthy future.

And so we saw the problem in this administration, and we decided to do something about it and started what I call the HealthierUS Initiative. Washington has got

to have initiatives, and so this is a HealthierUS Initiative. [Laughter] And here's the—we came up with four basic guidelines which make a lot of sense. And so our job of the Council and me and others, the Governors, the mayors, hopefully, is to focus on these four guidelines.

First, be physically active every day, not just once a week or a couple times a week and say, "Gosh, I've met the goal." It's every day, try to get some physical activity. And moms and dads, by the way, need to stay physically active as well, just not the sons or daughters.

Secondly, develop good eating habits. It's been estimated that dietary changes can reduce cancer deaths in the United States by a third. Well, that's—given that potential, it seems like to make a lot of sense for all of us to figure out what we're going to eat. Listen, I'd be the first to admit to the kids here, I didn't like vegetables when I was young. I've learned to like them, because I understand that they're good for you. That means not only vegetables but fruits, wise choices, not grease—[laughter]—but fruits and vegetables.

Third, take advantage of preventative screenings. This is more, obviously, applicable to older Americans. Ken Cooper insists that I have preventative screenings on an annual basis. And it is important for us to do this, I mean, for example, like check your blood pressure. It can be an indicator that something might go wrong. I hope the Y—I don't know if you do or not, it would make sense if you did, a neighborhood screening—you do; that's good—to help provide screening for citizens in each community, so people can be able to detect early whether or not they may have a potential problem. A lot of disease can be picked up through a simple test.

And fourth, make healthy choices. That not only means food, but no cigarettes, no excessive drinking, no drugs, no underage drinking. Those are the kind of healthy—you hear people say "healthy choices," that is what we're talking about. And if our country, old and young alike, followed the four steps and measures, we'd be a much healthier nation. It would be, really, one of the best

health care plans we could possibly implement in America.

To promote this program, as I mentioned, I talked Lynn into doing this job. It's called—and we're setting a fitness challenge today. And he and I are going to spend a lot of time working on the fitness challenge. I probably will spend most time by trying to set the example. It turns out, when a President shows up, cameras show up. And I like to exercise, and I want people to see their President exercising. Today I knocked off about 30 minutes' worth of exercise and feel better for it.

But our goal is to get 20 million additional Americans to exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. That is a noble goal, and it's an important goal. Americans will feel better if they accept the challenge. America will be better off when Americans accept the challenge. It's easy to get started in this, and so we've set up a web page, as Lynn mentioned, and John is responsible for the web page. It's presidentchallenge.org.

And it's an interesting opportunity for people. If you need a little discipline in your life—in other words, if you need—so you can check on yourself, a self-policing mechanism, call up the web page and follow the instructions, and there's a “go-by” to help you get involved with an exercise program. And I can assure you, and Lynn can assure you, the Governor assure you, once you get hooked on exercise, it is hard to get off. Once you get started, once you realize the benefits, once you understand how great you feel, once you understand that it's easier to go to sleep at night after a good day of exercise, you're not going to quit.

And so our job as a country, at the Federal level, the State level, and the local level is to get people started and realize the great benefits of exercise. And so we've set up this web page, trying to take advantage of the new technologies. So if people are interested, please go to presidentchallenge.org.

Now, the other thing is, I do think there is a role for the Federal Government to help. I proposed \$125 million for community monies to help different organizations like the Y to start promoting awareness. It's to facilitate an awareness campaign, to make people aware of what it's like to exercise, to make

people aware of opportunities available in the communities, and to make people aware that—what good nutrition and good exercise will do for their long-term health.

The funds would be available to target obesity and diabetes and asthma. It also could be used to encourage preventative screenings. In other words, it's a part of a larger process throughout our society to get this initiative going. And I hope Congress takes a good, solid look at it.

The other thing we're going to try to do at the Federal—not “try to do”—will do at the Federal level, is provide incentives for local schools to focus on better nutrition and eating habits. As you know, the Federal Government is involved with the school programs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is integrally involved, and it makes sense to me, since we've got a lot of kids eating food around the country once the schools are in, that we have better nutrition. And the Federal Government must encourage better nutrition at the local school level, which we will do.

One of the things I talk a lot about is the need to really work on cultural change in America to encourage a culture of personal responsibility, to encourage people to be responsible for the decisions they make in life. I like to talk about if you're a mother or a dad, reminding people you're responsible for loving your child and really making sure your child understands the difference between right and wrong and what it means to make right choices in life. If you're involved, if you're worried about your public school system, you're responsible for getting involved with it, as opposed to hoping somebody far away gets involved. You're responsible for getting involved with your schools.

You're responsible if you're a CEO, by the way, in America, for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. You're responsible for loving a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. The Initiative, the HealthierUS Initiative, really speaks to personal responsibility, doesn't it? It says that we are responsible for our own health. By making the right choices, we can make the right choice for our future. By making healthy choices we can do the right things for our future.

Moms and dads, by working on healthy choices not only for themselves but their kids, are doing their job as a parent. By exercising every day, by finding time, by carving out time, no matter how busy you may seem or how boring exercise may seem initially, it's a part of a responsibility culture. And I appreciate giving it—being given the chance to come and talk about this.

We'll work on health care matters. We're working on Medicare reform. That's—we need to work on Medicare reform. And we're working on how to make sure the working uninsured get insurance. But the truth of the matter is, one of the best reforms in America for health care is a strong, preventative health care program that starts with each American being responsible for what he or she eats, what he or she drinks, what he or she doesn't smoke, and is responsible for whether or not they get out and exercise on a regular basis. I encourage my fellow citizens to exercise.

Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming, and may God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the gymnasium at the Lakewest Family YMCA. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Lynn C. Swann, Vice Chairman Dorothy G. "Dot" Richardson, and Council Members Paul R. Carrozza, John P. Burke, and Dr. Teddy L. Mitchell, President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports; Kenneth L. Gladish, national executive director and chief executive officer, YMCA of the USA; Gov. Rick Perry of Texas; Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper, President's personal physician; and Andrew Simpson, youth volunteer, Lakewest Family YMCA.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

July 12

In the morning, in Abuja, Nigeria, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later,

in the courtyard of the Nicon Hilton Hotel, the President met with U.S. Embassy employees and their families.

Later in the morning, at the Abuja National Hospital, the President and Mrs. Bush had a briefing on HIV/AIDS programs, toured laboratories, and participated in a roundtable discussion with medical staff and beneficiaries of HIV/AIDS mother-to-child transmission prevention programs.

Also in the morning, at Aso Presidential Villa, the President and Mrs. Bush participated in a welcoming ceremony with President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

July 14

In the morning, the President had intelligence and FBI briefings and met with the National Security Council. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command, and his wife, Cathryn, in honor of General Franks' retirement.

The White House announced that the President will host Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, on July 20–21.

The President declared a major disaster in Arizona and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by the Aspen fire on June 17 and continuing.

July 15

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Prime Minister Vladimir Spidla of the Czech Republic to discuss the situation in Iraq and European-U.S. relations.

Later in the morning, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

In the afternoon, the President participated in a photo opportunity with teenagers

involved in the Seeds of Peace camp program. Later, he met with bipartisan congressional leaders to discuss Medicare reform.

The White House announced that the President will host the G-8 Summit in Sea Island, GA, on June 8-10, 2004.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert B. Charles to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomasina V. Rogers to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President declared a major disaster in Ohio and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on July 4 and continuing.

July 16

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he made brief remarks to U.S. Attorneys at the Department of Justice headquarters building.

Later in the morning, the President met with economists.

In the afternoon, the President participated in the ceremonial swearing-in of Office of Management and Budget Director Joshua B. Bolten.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with Members of Congress to discuss African affairs.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a reception in the Residence followed by a dinner on the State Floor for former President Gerald Ford and his wife, Betty, in honor of former President Ford's 90th birthday.

The President announced his intention to nominate George H. Walker to be Ambassador to Hungary.

July 17

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing and met with the National Security Council. Later, he met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Veterans of Foreign Wars commander-in-chief Raymond C. Sisk.

Later, he participated in an interview with a journalist from *Leaders* magazine.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with U.S. Ambassador to Japan Howard H. Baker, Jr. Later, the President met with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina to the White House on July 23.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) of the Palestinian Authority to the White House for a meeting and working lunch on July 25.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel to the White House for a meeting and working lunch on July 29.

July 18

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Dallas, TX.

In the evening, the President attended a Bush-Cheney reception at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel. Later, he and Mrs. Bush returned to the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX.

The White House announced that the President will award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to the following individuals in a ceremony at the White House on July 23: Jacques Barzun, Julia Child, Roberto Clemente Walker, Van Cliburn, Vaclav Havel, Charlton Heston, Edward Teller, R. David Thomas, Byron Raymond White, James Q. Wilson, and John R. Wooden.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Joseph Grossenbacher to be a member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Peter Lichtenbaum to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration.

The President announced his intention to designate Joan Ridder Challinor as Chairman

of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Claudette on July 15 and continuing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted July 14

Craig S. Iscoe,
of the District of Columbia, to be Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Frederick D. Dorsey, retired.

Margaret Catharine Rodgers,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Florida, vice Lacey A. Collier, retiring.

Paul Michael Warner,
of Utah, to be U.S. Attorney for the District of Utah for the term of 4 years (reappointment).

Submitted July 15

Robert B. Charles,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs), vice R. Rand Beers, resigned.

Kristin J. Forbes,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Randall S. Kroszner, resigned.

Thomasina V. Rogers,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2009 (reappointment).

Harvey S. Rosen,
of New Jersey, to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, vice Mark B. McClellan.

Withdrawn July 15

William Preston Graves,
of Kansas, to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation for the remainder of the term expiring December 10, 2005, vice Mel Carnahan, which was sent to the Senate on January 9, 2003.

Submitted July 17

Gwendolyn Brown,
of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, vice Arnold Gregory Holz, resigned.

Susan C. Schwab,
of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, vice Kenneth W. Dam, resigned.

George H. Walker,
of Missouri, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Hungary.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released July 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Released July 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed into law H.R. 825,

H.R. 917, H.R. 925, H.R. 981, H.R. 985, H.R. 1055, H.R. 1368, H.R. 1465, H.R. 1596, H.R. 1609, H.R. 1740, H.R. 2030, and S. 858

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Arizona

Announcement of nomination for Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Released July 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Josh Bolton

Statement by the Press Secretary: United States Hosting 2004 Group of Eight (G-8) Summit in Sea Island, GA

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Ohio

Released July 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Passage of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act

Released July 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel

Statement by the Press Secretary: Enhanced U.S.-U.K. Exchange of Defense-Related Information

Released July 18

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Press Secretary: U.S.-U.K. Discussions on British Detainees

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the recipients of the Presidential Medal of

Freedom scheduled for presentation on July 23

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Texas

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 709

Fact sheet: President Bush Highlights Health and Fitness Initiative

Acts Approved by the President

Approved July 14

H.R. 825 / Public Law 108-46
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7401 West 100th Place in Bridgeview, Illinois, as the "Michael J. Healy Post Office Building"

H.R. 917 / Public Law 108-47
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1830 South Lake Drive in Lexington, South Carolina, as the "Floyd Spence Post Office Building"

H.R. 925 / Public Law 108-48
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1859 South Ashland Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, as the "Cesar Chavez Post Office"

H.R. 981 / Public Law 108-49
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 141 Erie Street in Linesville, Pennsylvania, as the "James R. Merry Post Office"

H.R. 985 / Public Law 108-50
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 111 West Washington Street in Bowling Green, Ohio, as the "Delbert L. Latta Post Office Building"

H.R. 1055 / Public Law 108-51
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1901 West Evans Street in Florence, South Carolina, as the "Dr. Roswell N. Beck Post Office Building"

H.R. 1368 / Public Law 108–52

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7554 Pacific Avenue in Stockton, California, as the “Norman D. Shumway Post Office Building”

H.R. 1465 / Public Law 108–53

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4832 East Highway 27 in Iron Station, North Carolina, as the “General Charles Gabriel Post Office”

H.R. 1596 / Public Law 108–54

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2318 Woodson Road in St. Louis, Missouri, as the “Timothy Michael Gaffney Post Office Building”

H.R. 1609 / Public Law 108–55

To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 West Boston Street in Brookfield, Missouri, as the “Admiral Donald Davis Post Office Building”

H.R. 1740 / Public Law 108–56

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1502 East Kiest Boulevard in Dallas, Texas, as the “Dr. Caesar A.W. Clark, Sr. Post Office Building”

H.R. 2030 / Public Law 108–57

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 120 Baldwin Avenue in Paia, Maui, Hawaii, as the “Patsy Takemoto Mink Post Office Building”

H.R. 2474 / Public Law 108–58

To authorize the Congressional Hunger Center to award Bill Emerson and Mickey Leland Hunger Fellowships for fiscal years 2003 and 2004

S. 858 / Public Law 108–59

To extend the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, and for other purposes

Approved July 17

S. 709 / Public Law 108–60

To award a congressional gold medal to Prime Minister Tony Blair